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H4K KOC**

(56) Documents cited
GB 2205214 A GB 2042234 A

(58) Field of search
**UK CL (Edition K) G4V VAA, H4K
INT CL⁵ G07F, H04M**

(54) **Communication of coin freed machine with central control unit**

(57) Information is automatically relayed between a data-generating machine (2), such as a coin freed entertainment machine or a picture taking machine, and a data-monitoring machine (1) via a telephone link (3). The link is an auto-dial radiation telephone link such as a cellular telephone link. The data may be relayed at predetermined intervals and may relate to machine operations such as takings or may be immediately transmitted to signal a breakdown or unauthorised tampering with the machine. The coin freed machine may be connected directly to the telephone or via an interface or modem.

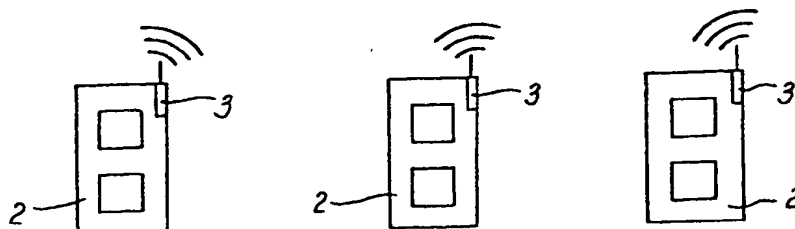
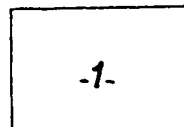


Fig. 1

At least one drawing originally filed was informal and the print reproduced here is taken from a later filed formal copy
The claims were filed later than the filing date within the period prescribed by Rule 25(1) of the Patents Rules 1982

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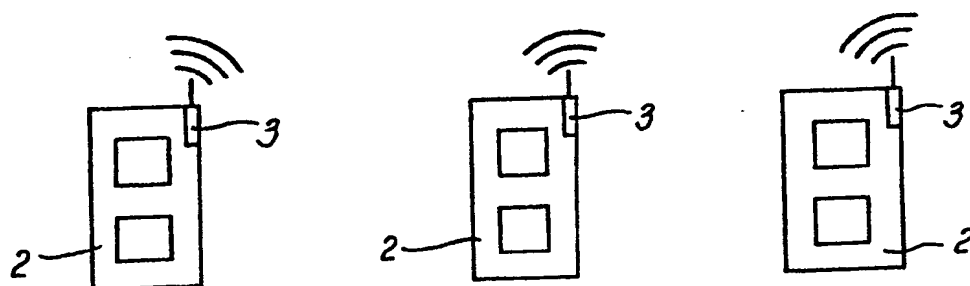
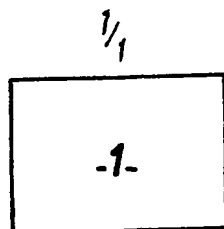


FIG. 1

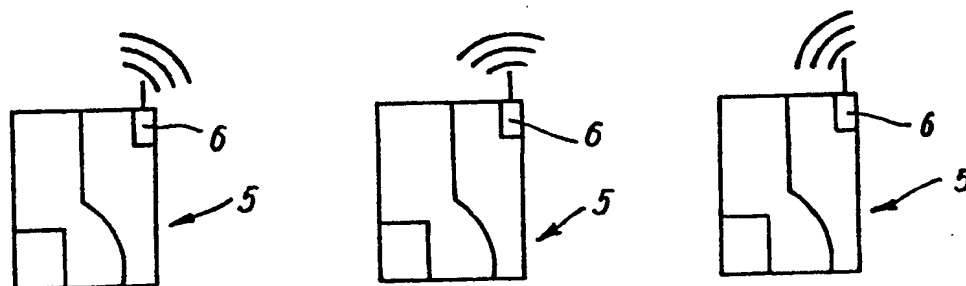
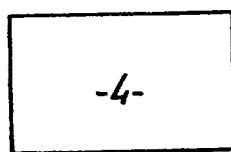


FIG. 2

COMMUNICATION SYSTEM

This invention relates to an automatic communication system for use between a data-generating machine, and a data-monitoring device.

GB 2042234B describes a machine system in which coin-freed
5 entertainment machines are connected to a remote control device by transmission links such as an auto-dial telephone system. With this arrangement machine operating instructions can be relayed to the machines from the control device, and machine operational data can be relayed to the control device. As specifically described in the
10 specification of the patent an auto-dial cable telephone system is used.

According to the present invention there is provided an automatic communication system for use between a data-generating machine, and a data-monitoring machine using an auto-dial telephone link, characterised in that the telephone link comprises a radiation telephone link.

15 With this arrangement there is the advantage that it is not necessary to site the machine near to a telephone connection. A cable-free telephone can be fitted in the machine or connected thereto and the machine can then be positioned as desired. Conveniently the telephone may be of the cellular kind although any other suitable kind of
20 radio-telephone or short-distance radiation link relay telephone may be used on any suitable transmission frequency.

The machine may be connected directly to the telephone or via any suitable interface or modem as required.

The system of the invention may be utilised to transmit alarm
25 signals, or routine data signals or the like.

In one embodiment of the invention, the system is used with

entertainment machines such as fruit machines or the like to relay machine operational data and/or to signal a breakdown or unauthorised tampering with the machine or the like. Where routine operational data is transmitted, this may be effected at regular intervals or on demand
5 or otherwise as appropriate. Where alarm signals are transmitted, this may be effected at the time of the alarm condition or otherwise as appropriate.

In an alternative embodiment of the invention, the system is used with an automatic coin-operated picture-taking machine, e.g. of the
10 kind described in copending application No. 8904535.5, and in this case the system may be used to transmit machine operational data and/or to generate alarm signals relating to a breakdown, unauthorised tampering, exhaustion of materials used by the machine or the like. Transmissions may be effected as with the first embodiment.

15 The invention will now be described further by way of example only and with reference to the accompanying drawings in which:

Fig. 1 is a diagrammatic representation of one embodiment of the invention; and

Fig. 2 is a diagrammatic representation of an alternative
20 embodiment of the invention.

As shown in Fig. 1, there is a main computer-based control unit 1 at a central control location, and a plurality of fruit machines 2 at different, remote locations.

Each fruit machine 2 generates machine data which can be fed
25 under the control of an appropriate control device to a telephone via an interface or modem as required. The telephone is of the cellular

kind and is built into the fruit machine.

At periodic intervals, say every night, the control device in the fruit machine 2 causes the telephone 3 to auto-dial the number of a receiver associated with the control unit 1. Machine data (e.g. relating
5 to takings etc.) is then transmitted through the radiation telephone link to the computer 1 where it can be stored and processed as required.

In the event of an alarm condition, such as a break down of the fruit machine 2, the telephone is caused to auto-dial immediately and data signifying the occurrence and nature of the breakdown is transmitted.

10 With the embodiment of Fig. 2, there is a main computer-based control unit 4 at a central control location, and a plurality of automatic picture taking machines 5 at different remote locations.

As with the embodiment of Fig. 1, the machines 5 have cellular telephones 6 which can relay machine operational data and alarm signals
15 to the control unit 4.

The machines 5 consume materials such as printing paper and the cellular phone can alert the control unit 1 as to the imminent exhaustion of such materials whereby fresh supplies can be despatched in good time.

20 It is of course to be understood that the invention is not intended to be restricted to the details of the above embodiments which are described by way of example only.

CLAIMS

1. An automatic communication system for use between a data-generating machine, and a data-monitoring machine using an auto-dial telephone link, characterised in that the telephone link comprises a radiation telephone link.
- 5 2. A system according to claim 1 characterised in that the telephone link is of the cellular kind.
3. A system according to claim 1 or 2 characterised in that the data-generating machine is an entertainment machine.
4. A system according to claim 3 characterised in that the link is used to
10 relay machine operational data.
5. A system according to claim 3 or 4 characterised in that the link is used to signal a breakdown of the machine.
6. A system according to any one of claims 3 to 5 characterised in that the link is used to signal unauthorised tampering with the machine.
- 15 7. A system according to claim 1 or 2 characterised in that the data-generating machine is an automatic coin-operated picture-taking machine.
8. A system according to claim 7 characterised in that the link is used to transmit machine operational data.
9. A system according to claim 7 or 8 characterised in that the link is used
20 to signal a breakdown of the machine.
10. A system according to any one of claims 7 to 9 characterised in that the link is used to signal unauthorised tampering with the machine.
11. A system substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to and as illustrated in the accompanying drawings.